Violation of Forest Conservation Act by windmill companies in Chitradurga District

1337. DR. VIJAY MALLYA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that cases of encroachment and violation of Forest Consevation Act have been registered against two windmill operators in Chitradurga district (Karnataka);

(b) whether Government are aware that the windmill company has built 19 windmills against the permitted 16 units;

(c) whether it is a fact that the windmill company has not got permission from the State Government; and

(d) whether it is also a fact that the windmill companies entering the reserve forest area are spoiling the ecosystem in the name of clean power?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) As per information received from the State Government of Karnataka, forest offence cases for violations have been booked against two windmill companies, M/s Suzlon Energy Limited, and M/s Enercon (India) Limited under the Karnataka Forest Act, 1963.

(b) and (c) The Central Government and subsequently the State Government accorded approval for diversion of 21.54 ha. of forest land in Sy. No. 33 of Chitradurga village for establishment of 20 MW wind power project in favour of M/s Suzlon Energy Ltd., Bangalore. The approval was accorded to erect 16 wind turbines as per project plan. In the meanwhile, Energy Department of State Government, enhanced the quantum of power to be generated from 20MW to 23 J5MW in respect of this project. Enhanced power generation of 3.75 MW required installation of 3 additional turbines of 1.25 MW capacity each. The User Agency submitted a proposal to the State Forest Department seeking permission to install 3 additional turbines. However, the User Agency went ahead with the work of installation of 3 additional turbines without waiting for permission from the Government. Since installation of additional 3 turbines was done without requisite approval, a forest offence

case had been registered against the User Agency. However, there is no encroachment of the forest land since the additional 3 turbines are installed within the area of already approval diverted forest land.

As regards M/s Enercon (India) Limited, the Central Government accorded approval to the State Government granting permission to divert 134.14 ha. of forest land in favour of M/s Enercon (India) Limited for wind power project *vide* letter dated 6-5-2005. The User Agency proceeded with the work without waiting for sanction from the State Government. As such, a forest offence case was registered against the user agency. The State Government has recently accorded necessary approval *vide* order dated 19-7-2005.

(d) Generation of wind power is considered eco-friendly in nature. As regards the adverse impact on environment due to construction of infrastructure like roads, transmission line etc., for the wind power project, the Central Government while granting approval under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, stipulates strict conditions like compensatory afforestation, soil conservation works, retaining wall construction for roads etc. for mitigating adverse impact. State Governments are required to monitor the compliance of conditions.

Poaching of tigers

1338. SHRI B.J. PANDA:
SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that illegal trade in tiger organs is highly organized in our country;

(b) if so, what is the current data of poaching, both official and non-official from 1999 to 2004;

(c) whether it is a fact that certain lacunae in the existing laws have led to low conviction of wildlife poachers;

(d) if so, whether Government propose to bring in stringent measures to wean away poachers; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?